THE AWAKENING CHURCH

By

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to God the Father, Jesus the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, who lifted me out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon the rock of salvation, through the precious and powerful blood of Jesus Christ.

Through the Divine Word, the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, I have been miraculously healed of a broken neck, blessed to travel with my wife to 43 countries to preach God's Word, and to see people turn from their sinful ways and follow Jesus Christ.

It is true what is written in God's precious word in Romans chapter 13**. "***Obey the government, for God is the one who has put it there.* ***There is no government (anywhere in the world) that God has not allowed to be placed into power.*** *So, those who refuse to obey the laws of the land are in fact refusing to obey God, and punishment will follow.*

For the policeman does not frighten people who are doing right; but those doing evil will always fear him. So if you do not want to be afraid, keep the laws and you will get along well.

The policeman is sent by God to help you. But if you are doing something wrong, of course you should be afraid, for he will have you punished. He is sent by God for that very purpose.

Obey the laws, then, for two reasons: first, to keep from being punished, and second, just because you know you should.

Pay your taxes too, for these same two reasons. For government workers need to be paid, so that they can keep on doing God's work, serving you.

Pay everyone whatever he ought to have: pay your taxes and import duties gladly, obey those over you, and give honour and respect to all those to whom it is due.

Pay all your debts ***except the debt of love for others — keep paying off that debt forever -never finish paying that!***

For if you love them; you will be obeying all of God's laws; fulfilling all of his requirements. If you love your neighbour, as much as you love yourself, you will not want to harm or cheat him, or kill him or steal from him. And you will not sin with his wife, or want what is his, or do anything else the Ten Commandments say is wrong.

All of the Ten Commandments are wrapped up in this one, to love your neighbour as you love yourself. ***Love does no wrong to anyone.*** *That is why it fully satisfies all of God's requirements.*

It is the only law you need. Another reason for right living is this: you know how late it is; time is running out. ***Wake up, for the coming of the Lord is nearer now than when we first believed.***

The night is far-gone the day of his return will soon be here. So quit the evil deeds of darkness, and put on the armour of right living, as we, who live in the daylight should!

Be decent and true in everything you do, so that all can approve your behaviour. Do not spend your time in wild parties and getting drunk, or in adultery, and lust, or fighting, or jealousy.

But ask the Lord Jesus Christ to help you live as you should, and don't make plans to enjoy evil."

Foreword

The rise of Islamic militancy and the continued bombardment through various forms of the media, (including parliaments around the world), against Christian ideologies, morals and values, have prompted me to write this book, as a challenge to all Christians to ***"wake up out of their sleep"!***

I personally believe that Jesus Christ has already sent out the invitations for the ten virgins to gather at the entrance of the house of the betrothed, because the bridegroom (Jesus Christ) is getting ready to come back to earth, and claim His betrothed and make her His bride.

In Eastern culture, it is an honour to be personally chosen by the bridegroom, to be one of the persons standing outside the betrothed's house, to sound the alarm of rejoicing, when the groom is first seen approaching the betrothed's house.

The chosen persons will be the personal close friends of the bridegroom. In the case referred to above, it means that the people chosen to be the honoured ones, standing outside the betrothed's house, will be very close friends of Jesus Christ Himself.

But sadly, in the parable of the ten virgins, (told by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 25), only five of these personal friends, proved to be worthy to enter into the house and partake of the celebrations, to witness the marriage celebration and to have a seat at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The bride, that Jesus Christ is coming back to claim, will be a perfect bride, a bride without blemish, and a bride anxiously waiting for His return.

Unfortunately, many people in the Churches today are not perfect, and they are not without blemish, and they are not anxiously waiting for the bridegroom's return.

This is because "***they have lost their first love"***. They have become bogged down in religiosity and doctrinal double-talk, so they fail to hear the still small voice of the Holy Spirit, calling them to get ready; **nor do they recognise the signs of the times**; which have been prophesied for centuries, telling us what to look out for, prior to His coming again.

The scripture clearly tells us that when Jesus returns for His bride there will be some who will be excluded from heaven (just like the five virgins) because Jesus will say to them: ***"I don't know you",*** even though they will claim that they have done many things for Him, in His name.

I trust and pray that you will not be one of those that are rejected by Jesus Christ on that day!

Now is the time for you to ***"wake up out of your spiritual sleep"*** *and go back to serving God with all your heart, body and soul.*

CHAPTER ONE:

LET US STOP "DOING CHURCH" AND LET US START "BECOMING THE CHURCH".

In Matthew chapter 16, verse, 18, Jesus makes this statement, which has been unfortunately misinterpreted by many churches throughout the ages.

Verse 18: And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Jesus has earlier in this chapter, asked His disciples who they think He is. There were several different replies.

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying: Whom do men say that I, "the Son of man" am?

And they said; some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them,

But who say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

When Peter, under the anointing and revelation of the Holy Spirit, announced that Jesus was **the Christ,** "***the Son of the Living God"***, Jesus replied with verse 18 above.

Firstly, Jesus acknowledges that Simon Bar-Jonah has not come to this revelation by using his own six senses. No Simon has received this revelation from the Holy Spirit, directly from His Father in Heaven.

Jesus goes on to say "You are Peter" and **upon this rock,** ***I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.***

The Greek word for Peter is, **G4074:** Πέτρος, ***Petros***, *pet'-ros* [Apparently a primary word; **a (piece of)** ***rock*** (larger than G3037); as a name, *Petrus*, an apostle:—Peter, rock. Compare G2786.

Jesus referred to Peter as a "piece of rock" (a pebble), but upon **this "Rock"** (**a different Greek word**,) Jesus will build His church.

That particular Greek word: **G4073:** πέτρα, **petra**, *pet'-ra,* [Feminine of the same as G4074; **a (mass of)** ***rock*** (literally or figuratively):—massive rock.

This mass of rock (petra) is what Jesus is going to build His church upon. So what was the massive piece of rock that Jesus was referring too?

I believe that this "rock" ***was the massive revelation that Peter had just received from the Holy Spirit, that Jesus was "the Christ", the "Son of the Living God",*** the one that was foretold by the prophets in the scriptures for centuries, who would come and save His people. So on this assumption let us move forward.

Jesus says, ***"I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT"***

Let us put all of our historical & doctrinal ideas aside, and let us now study this statement in detail.

"I". (Jesus) makes the claim that **Jesus** will build His church. The church is not going to be built by people - **NO!** Jesus makes that definitely clear. **Jesus is going to build His church, Himself, and He is going to build it His way!**

"Will". When Jesus makes that statement, it is a future event.

"Build". To build anything, takes time, and it needs:

- **A plan,**
- **A process**
- **A start, and**
- **A finish**

"My". Jesus makes it very clear, that the **"Church"** belongs to Him.

- It does not belong to the Pope
- It does not belong to any denomination,
- It does not belong to any race, or ethnic group.
- It does not even belong to the senior pastor.
- **IT BELONGS TO JESUS**. He is its' Head, and we are its' Body.

"Church". G1577, ἐκκλησία, ekklēsia, *ek-klay-see'-ah,* [From a compound of G1537 and a derivative of G2564; **a *calling out***, that is, (concretely) a popular *meeting*, especially a religious *congregation* (Jewish *synagogue*, or a Christian community of members on earth, or saints in heaven or both): — assembly, church.

Jesus has a plan, a process, a start, and a finish, to **"call out"** His people from among the unbelievers, to become a Christian community on earth, or as saints in heaven.

Jesus had a plan, to go to the cross, to suffer, and to die for our sins. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, so that we could once again, come into direct fellowship and the presence of God the Father.

That is the plan. We know this plan was put into effect. Jesus was betrayed, as was foretold in the scriptures, by one of His friends for thirty pieces of silver.

He was captured, tortured, and finally crucified. At that moment before He gave up His soul, Jesus cried out, **"It is finished[1]!"** Yes, **the plan was completed!**

To verify that the plan was finished, Jesus proves He is victorious over death and the evil one, and He is raised from the dead, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and is seen walking around in Israel, for ten days, by more than five hundred people.

So now, ***the process begins***:

In Acts chapter 1, verse 4, Jesus ate bread with His disciples and told them to wait in Jerusalem until they receive the promise from the Father. The process of separation, ***the process of calling out***, the process of obedience to Jesus now begins.

In Acts 1:15-26, Peter reminds the disciples of the prophecies in the psalms written by King David, that the Messiah would be betrayed by one who dwelt among them [Ps. 41:9]

There is no need to fear when times of trouble come, even though surrounded by enemies! They trust in their wealth and boast about how rich they are, yet not one of them, though rich as kings, can ransom his own brother from the penalty of sin! For God's forgiveness does not come that way. For a soul is far too precious to be ransomed by mere earthly wealth. There is not enough of it in all the earth to buy eternal life for just one soul, to keep it out of hell.

Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein. [Ps. 69:25] Let another take up his office (bishoprick). [Ps. 109:8]

[1] Jesus was quoting from Psalm 31: "into your hand I commit my spirit"

So they prayed for a replacement from among the followers of Jesus, who had travelled with Him, from the time He started His ministry. They selected two persons by name: the first one known as:

Joseph Justus (called Barsabas) **G923,** Βαρσαβᾶς, Barsabas, *bar-sab,'* Of Chaldee origin, [H1247], and probably [H6634]; *son of Sabas* (or *Tsaba*); *Barsabas*, the name of two Israelites:—Barsabas, and Matthias.

They prayed and drew lots and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the original eleven disciples, to receive Apostleship.

Therefore, everything is now in place ***for the start of the Church***. The prophecies have been fulfilled about the betrayal of Jesus. Jesus is betrayed, crucified, and resurrected. The betrayer has been replaced by another, to take up his office among the brethren.

We know that there were more than 500 people who saw the resurrected Jesus, but ***"even though they saw Him"***, that was not enough for them to be obedient and to wait in Jerusalem until the promise from the Father is received.

The 500 is now reduced to 120. It is a shame, there could have been 500 people in the upper room to receive the Holy Spirit – but unfortunately, even today, **"seeing", is not "believing".**

They saw the miracle of resurrection power, but still they did not believe He was the Messiah, otherwise they would have remained in Jerusalem to receive the promise, that Jesus told His disciples about.

When the Holy Spirit came upon those 120 people in the Upper Room, ***the empowerment of the process*** was set in motion.

These 120 people not only believed who Jesus was, they had elected to be obedient to His words, and had remained in Jerusalem, **"called out"** from among the unbelievers, by continually fasting and praying for 40 days.

It is recorded that at 9:00 am on Pentecost morning; The 120 people, were filled with the Holy Spirit, and started to speak in other tongues, as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance.

The 120 started preaching in the marketplace, speaking to all the people, who had gathered from across the known world; speaking to them in 14 known languages. They had not learned these languages in their natural minds. Speaking to them about the Messiah and all they had seen and heard.

Peter stood up, and under the power, anointing, and revelation of the Holy Spirit, preached to the multitudes, reminding them of the promises of prophet Joel, that in the last days, God Almighty would pour out His Spirit **upon all flesh**. [Joel 2:28].

Onto all thy servants, thy handmaidens, they shall prophecy. I will show wonders in the heavens above, signs in the earth beneath; blood & fire, vapour & smoke.

As a pre-warning, the sun shall be turned into darkness, which happened while Jesus was on the cross [Mt. 24:29], before the notable day of the Lord comes (again).

Peter went on to remind all those who were listening, to remind them that Jesus had been approved of God by signs & miracles. He then went on the remind them of what the Prophet Isaiah had prophesied, about how the Messiah would be captured, tried by an illegal court and convicted, even though there was no sin in Him. Even to the detail that He did not even open His mouth in His own defence.

He went on to reveal all the things, which had happened to Jesus Christ, from Chapter 2, verses 22-36. At the completion of this sermon, given by Peter, with conviction & authority, the people believed and asked what should they do (verse 37).

Peter answered with the famous verse: Acts 2:38. In this verse are three (3) component parts, which must occur, to have a person, called out of the secular world, and into a world governed and controlled by Jesus Christ.

- Repent of your sins;
- Be baptised in water; and
- Receive the Holy Spirit.

Afterwards, He continued preaching and teaching them about the life and miracles of Jesus Christ, and the revelation that He was the Messiah and three thousand people gave their hearts to Jesus Christ, were baptised and received the Holy Spirit.

The church had started; BUT

- There was no denominations;
- There were no bylaws, or membership requirements;
- There were no deacons or elders;
- There was no building, or places of meeting;
- The church was not restricted to a particular race, or ethnic group.
- The church was the Body of Jesus Christ, operating with Jesus Christ Himself being the head of the Body, and influencing the Body, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Here is a template of how the church gets started. People have a desire to spread God's word, under the anointing, revelation and power of the Holy Spirit. These people go where the people are congregated, (not wait for the people to come to them) and preach the word with revelation and authority. [Acts 1:8]

They lead the people to a place where they want to change their lifestyle, because they recognise that where they are now will not take them into an eternal presence with Jesus, but an eternal presence separated from Him because of their sins. Lead them to Acts 2:38, so they can change their lifestyles and follow Jesus.

Now we have **"babes in Christ",** people who, because of their immaturity, can only accept the milk of the word.

We need gifted teachers, who can take "the meat of the word" and grind it up into easily digestible portions, so that the babies now start to grow and mature (spiritually) as well as understand where they have come from, and where they are headed.

We now have people who will move into a place of being **"spiritual teenagers"**. They are eager to do great exploits for Jesus, but their knowledge is limited, so sometimes they go into situations where they are not spiritually prepared, or ready to deal with.

Unfortunately, sometimes we have situations with this level of Christian believers, which result in **"crash & burn"**. We have to go in a do a **"recovery mission"**, sometimes on the spiritual teenager and other times on the persons, they were witnessing too.

Without having developed **"Spiritual Fathers"** within the Body of Christ, we leave opportunities open for Satan to come in and plunder the treasures in earthen vessels.

We see from the rest of the Book of Acts, and the Epistles, and the writings of James and Peter, **the pattern of teaching new believers.**

That is why Apostle Paul clearly outlines the template of the five-fold ministries in the Book of Ephesians, so that these gifted people, can be raised up, to teach others, and lead all to a similar level of maturity in the Body of Christ.

This was achieved, **by raising spiritual fathers**, who, when perceived to be ready and mature enough, charged believers to go out and preach the Gospel, operating in the gifts that have been identified on each believer by the laying on of hands.

This template has not changed since the time of the ascension of Jesus Christ, because Jesus is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. [Hebrews 13:8]

Likewise, the Word of God is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. The method of implementation is still the same, because the Holy Spirit is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Because of these facts, we in the Body of Christ should still be implementing this template TODAY, as laid out in the scriptures, so that the final chapter of the scriptures can happen.

Jesus has indicated in many places in scripture that He is coming back to the earth to claim His perfect bride, a bride without blemish. This will happen at the end of the "church age".

It is stated that at that time, at the sounding of the trumpets, we will see Him in the clouds. Those that are dead in Christ shall rise first, and those who are alive, at that time, shall rise and meet Him in the sky. The church age will have been completed.

Now, many trials, punishments, and tribulations, shall happen to those who remain on the earth, those who heard the good news, but refused to accept it into their hearts. The scriptures in the Book of Revelation, clearly outlines the sequence of events, and what shall happen to all humanity that remains.

As this directly affects all of us, I would recommend that you have your pastors, clearly teach you all the aspects and ramifications of this last book of the Bible.

There are promises in chapter one for pastors who read this to their congregations. There are also promises to all those who hear this teaching and put it into practise in their daily lives. Not sure what they are? Then please go and read Revelations chapter one, verse 3.

CHAPTER TWO: THE IMPORTANCE OF SALVATION

We are told in the scriptures that when we accept Jesus Christ as our saviour, our old life is passed away and all things become new. We become prophets, priests, and kings, joint-heirs with Jesus.

But the $64 dollar question is this: When do all of these events take place? Is it instantaneous, or is it progressive over time?

If you are the only child of a rich family, you are the heir to the fortune, when your father dies. If he dies while you are still an infant, then a guardian is appointed, to look after you and your affairs, until such time as it is deemed that you are "adult enough" and "responsible enough" to take over the responsibilities of your own affairs.

I believe a similar process occurs with our Christian lives. When Jesus was born, He was the "son of God", but He did not have the authority to do miracles, or give anointed sermons at birth.

1. When you are a child you do "childish things" [Romans 13:11]
2. Later, at about 13 years of age, Jesus went to Jerusalem and confounded the Pharisees with His knowledge of the scriptures. He came back to Nazareth and subjected Himself to the authority of His stepfather (Joseph) and Mary, His mother.
3. He continued in submission, learning a trade, and helping to support the family, until the time came for Him to be recognised as a "Son".
4. According to Jewish law, a man could not become a "priest" until he had turned the age of 30 years. That is why Jesus started His ministry at this time (because He came not to abolish the law, but to fulfil the law.)

5. John the Baptist also started his ministry at the age of 30, just 6 months before Jesus started His own ministry.

If we are to fashion our lives on the life of Jesus Christ, we can understand there must be a similar process for each of us.

Apostle Paul led Timothy to Christ. He then took him under his wing and mentored him, taking Timothy with him on some of his missionary journeys, to teach him about Jesus, how to preach, and win souls for Jesus.

When Paul knew that Timothy was matured enough to go out on his own, he sent him off to be with other brethren, to sort out some of the problems in Crete. Timothy was sent out **"with the authority of Paul"** going with him.

Timothy had graduated from being a child, to a person under mentorship, and now to become a "son" with the authority of his "spiritual father".

Today in the church, we do not have too many people who are true **"spiritual sons"**, because the church has not emphasised the importance of **"spiritual fathers"**.

We need to get back to the template set out in the "first generation church", (**which worked),** which brought souls into the kingdom, which resulted in strong teaching and revelation from the Holy Spirit, and many signs and wonders following those who "truly" believed.

CHAPTER THREE: THE IMPORTANCE OF BAPTISM

People today believe that Baptism is something which started in the New Testament, but that is not true. The spiritual significance of "Baptism" goes right back to Moses and the miracle of taking the nation of Israel through the waters of the Red Sea – **"from slavery, into freedom"**.

The next time was when Joshua led the nation of Israel from "**the wilderness, into the Promised Land".**

When the nation of Israel was disobedient, Elijah was told to go and tell King Ahaz that there would be no rain on the land until there was repentance in the nation.

Three years later, Prophet Elijah told the king to assemble the nation on Mount Carmen and there to challenge the false prophets of Baal to prove their god, by making fire come down from heaven and take up

their offering. The story is well known in the Book of 1 Kings, but here again we see the significance of baptism.

Elijah knew that because the nation of Israel was outside of their covenant relationship with God Almighty, (because of their collective disobedience) he would have to symbolically, re-baptise the whole nation; otherwise God would not accept his sacrifice, on behalf of the nation of Israel.

How did he do this? He instructed the helpers to dig a trench right around the altar and the offering, and then fill 4 water jugs (which each held about 30 gallons of water) and pour it into the trench. This they were told to do 3 times. This makes 12 jugs of water – one for each of the 12 tribes of Israel.

By pouring out the 12 water jugs, Elijah was symbolically covering the sins of the nation of Israel with water, so that they were once again baptised and brought into covenant with God Almighty. Only then could God accept their offering. This is because God's word tells us that He will not accept the offerings of a disobedient people.

Up until the time of John the Baptist, sin was considered a "national issue". John the Baptist received the revelation that each individual person had been given the spirit of choice, and we could decide whether we obeyed the words of the Lord, or whether we rebelled against the words of the Lord. Each person is accountable before God for our own individual sins.

Therefore, each of us needed to be baptised in water, (completely immersed in water) as a sign to the people around us, and to God Almighty, that we were making a public declaration of changing our ways, and henceforth we would follow God and His statutes and commandments.

When Jesus came to John to be baptised, John recognised who He was and said that Jesus should be baptising him, because he was not worthy to baptise the Son of God. Jesus told him to do this, so that the scriptures could be fulfilled.

When Jesus went down into the water, He was proclaiming and confirming that all the people who follow God, they must do this, as a sign of their obedience to the Word of God.

When Jesus came up out of the water, the scripture records that John saw the Holy Spirit, (in the form of a dove) descending down from heaven and landing on the shoulder of Jesus Christ.

At the same time, a voice was heard from heaven saying: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

In the book of Acts chapter 2, Peter gets up to preach after being filled with the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. His preaching is inspired and anointed by the Holy Spirit, so that the people listening became aware of their sins. They asked Peter what should they do to change their situation.

a. Peter replied in Acts 2:38. "***Repent of your sins, be baptised, and you will receive the Holy Spirit."***
b. Notice there are three things, which are all together in this one verse of scripture.
c. The **first thing a new believer must do** is to **confess** and ***repent*** *of their sins.*
    i. This is to acknowledge that they are not perfect,
    ii. That they have not been obedient to God's instructions about how to live their lives, and
    iii. Now they want to make a public commitment to change the way they live their lives, and how they relate to other people.
d. The **second thing a new believer must do** is to ***be baptised***, as a public sign before all those gathered, that you are going down into the waters a sinner, and you are coming up out of the water cleansed, renewed, and set free.
    i. It is not the water, which does the cleansing; it is the blood of Jesus Christ.
    ii. The water is a symbol of this cleansing. The baptism is also the public acknowledgement of your confession that you are now becoming a follower of Jesus Christ.
    iii. You are now reborn, a new creation, old things have been passed away, all now has become new.
    iv. You are now free to enter once again into the direct presence of God Almighty, just as Adam did in the Garden of Eden, (before He sinned and was thrown out of the garden.)
    v. Baptism is like your entry-pass into heaven. You can travel there any time you want, to praise, to worship, to honour, and to glorify God.
e. The **third thing a new believer receives** is that they "receive" the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
    i. The Holy Spirit of God, the third part of the Trinity, comes to live and dwell within you.

ii. I go more into this part of the teachings in my book entitled: ***The Gifts, Administrations, and Offices of the Holy Spirit***., which you can download free of charge from my website at: www.scribd.com by typing in my name, or the name of the book mentioned above.

iii. The relevant extracted sections are given below:

2. CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

The most important spiritual revolution, since the Protestant reformation, some 400 years ago, is happening right now, and we all must become aware of it and what it means to the Body of Christ. A new force has appeared within the Christian ranks, and it is referred to, as 'the charismatic renewal'.

Unlimited by authority, and unconcerned by the organised church, this group of people is marching towards an experience that is completely in line, and in total harmony with the New Testament truths.

The charismatic renewal, is said to be the fastest growing religious movement, since the first century churches.

People from all walks of life, and from every Christian denomination, are coming together, all eager to receive truth and the power of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

In the early 1960's, people from all types of "traditional" churches, started receiving the infilling of the Holy Spirit; Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, and many more, just as the early disciples experienced & received this gift in the early churches, evidenced by the phenomenon called "speaking in other tongues".

To understand this better, we first must understand what the spiritual tongues really are; "Tongues", is a spiritual language, coming from the spiritual part of the body, not from the mind, but from the spirit.

Remember; the body is made up of 3 parts: mind, body & spirit. The words spoken by a person as "tongues" cannot be understood by the mind. In this experience, God gives the person, a Heavenly Language, or what is sometimes called, a "prayer language".

Wherever these people meet, the power of the Holy Spirit is in evidence.

Some groups of people believe that the power of the Holy Spirit was only for the early churches. But carefully examine Peter's words, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, as he spoke to the multitudes on the day of Pentecost.

ACTS 2:38-39. says: "Then Peter said unto them; Repent & be Baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and Ye Shall Receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

For the promise is unto you (i.e. those who were present at that time) and to your children, (i.e. the next generations) and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Many future generations)

In this Scripture passage, is the New Testament promise, to all those who will listen to, and take heed of, His instructions.

1. REPENT - the witness of the blood of Christ.
2. BE BAPTIZED - WATER BAPTISM - as a sign of your acceptance of Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour and indicating your wish to give a public testimony, of your beliefs, and the cleansing of your sins.
3. RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST (HOLY SPIRIT) - The evidence of the Spirit, working in your life.

The Scripture says that the Holy Spirit is available to all those that are afar off, to all those **that the Lord our God shall call**.

Isaiah 43:1-3 says:- "But now in spite of Your past sins, thus sayeth the Lord, who created you....

Fear not, for I have redeemed you, ransomed you by paying a price, instead of leaving you captives, (i.e. captives to sin): I have called you by name, you are mine."

If the Scripture says that you are called by your name, then the promise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are available to each one of you. When you receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit you receive blessings and benefits.

1. **LOVE OF GOD's WORD**

There will come into your life, a burning desire to know more about God's Word. The Bible which may have been uninteresting before, will suddenly become alive, as the veil is lifted off the truth, and you will start to understand Scriptures, which you did not understand before.

2. **STEWARDSHIP**

Another fruit of the Holy Spirit, is that people no longer feel that they <u>must</u> give to the church, as a ritual. They <u>want</u> to give and the interesting thing is, that the more that they give, the more blessings GOD gives in return to them.

3. **FACING UP TO SIN - REPENTANCE**

The third fruit of the Spirit is the ability to face up to sin. Many Christians try to hide from their sins, and make excuses for their behaviour. Christians who have received the Holy Spirit, are able to admit there is sin in their lives, confess it, ask forgiveness for it, receive forgiveness and the inner cleansing, which only comes from the action of the Blood of Christ, operating in their lives.

4. **DESIRE FOR EVANGELISM**

The fourth fruit of the Holy Spirit, which some people receive, is a burning desire to go out and spread the Word of God, to the unbelievers. These people of evangelistic compassion, will go throughout the world, to

any country, that the Holy Spirit directs them, to teach or preach the gospel of the good news of Christ Jesus.

5. **THE ABILITY TO REACH OUT TO OTHERS**

Another fruit of the Holy Spirit, is the ability to teach in special ministries and services, such as the field of counselling. Charismatics are free to talk to people and to help them, because God Almighty, through the Holy Spirit, has given these people the Gift of Counselling. Through this gift, God gives them the words to say, to help people in and through their problems.

6. **JOY & HAPPINESS OF SPIRIT**

People who are filled with the Holy Spirit, are a happy singing people, and singing will do special things for you.

Prov. 17:22 says: "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine".

Charismatics really are expressing their innermost desires, when they sing Phil. 4:4: "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice."

The move of God, the Holy Spirit, is evident in our hearts today by the joy we have, and the melody that flows from within us, from our souls, not just our minds.

7. **PHYSICAL HEALING**

If you want to hear outstanding experiences of healing, spend some time with people who are filled with the Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit). You will hear and rejoice at the many testimonies of healing you have never heard of before. These testimonies shall include cases of people being healed of so called "incurable" diseases, like broken necks, cancer, aids, leprosy. Other cases of people being cured of physical disabilities like blindness, deafness and dumbness. It really makes you want to lift up your voice in praises to God.

However, let us now look at Hebrews chapter 6. Here Apostle Paul clearly indicates that there are “Baptisms” (plural) meaning there is more than one.

1. We receive the first baptism, when we are baptised “spiritually” by the blood of Jesus Christ, when we say the sinner’s prayer and make our decision to become a follower of Jesus Christ.
2. We receive our second baptism, when we go into the waters, and are immersed in water, as described earlier in this teaching.
3. We receive the third baptism, when we receive the Holy Spirit into our lives.

Therefore, today, to be a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ, we need to understand there are three important baptisms that we receive, as described above. They do the following:

1. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all our unrighteousness.

2. The water baptism is our first step of public obedience that we are going to follow Jesus Christ and His teachings, and
3. The Holy Spirit dwelling within us, gives us the wisdom and the power to stand and fight against the evil forces of this world, which try to keep us in our old ways, which do not bring glory and honour to Christ.

I trust this is explanation enough, to teach your people before they go for baptism in water. After this, they need to be schooled in the fundamental teaching, which are defined in Hebrews chapter 6, verses 1 & 2, which are called the **"kindergarten teachings"** of the scriptures.

The most important item that each person should receive when they are baptised is a copy of the Bible, so that they can start to read the scriptures for themselves. I would suggest that they start by reading the Gospel of John.

CHAPTER FOUR: LOVE THE MOTHER OF YOUR CHILDREN

In a Focus on the Family Program, the speaker made a very interesting statement. He said the best thing any father can do is to love his wife, the mother of his children.

He said that showing love to your wife was very important, as it instils trust and peace within the household, and this trust and peace is transferred to your children.

Jesus said it quite clearly in Matthew Chapter 5: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." In a house where peace reigns, tension and strife cannot abound. These things are replaced by trust and love.

Jesus told us that husbands are to love and honour their wives, just as we are to love and honour Christ.

When we have an attitude of love towards our spouses, it is reflected back to us by our wives. This in turn is observed by our children and a sense of security is borne out in their souls and their spirits. When children feel secure in the home, they flourish in their schoolwork, are less troublesome and disobedient in their relationships with others, both at home and at school.

If you are having problems with your children at home, or at their school, then maybe it is time to take an audit of your home situation with your wife, or the mother of your children.

- Do you show love to your wife in the presence of your children, or do they see you continually at each other's throats, whether verbally or physically?
- Is your place a home where other people feel comfortable when visiting, or are they stepping on egg shells, because they can feel the tension in the house and can almost cut it with a knife?

In our enlightened society, we think we know better than God and so we have developed a society where divorce is now common place.

In today's society here in Australia more than 40% of all married couples are divorced, or will end up divorced.

No longer is it common practice for the husband to stay with the mother of his children and together raise them up to be God loving, caring teenagers, and later adults. So now the problems are starting to be seen more clearly. **Dysfunctional families breed dysfunctional children**.

Dysfunctional children have more problems adjusting to society, because they don't have the love and trust models which God laid down for all of us in His word.

As we come to the end of this Family month celebrations for this year, let us reflect on our own individual family situations. Are we bringing up our children as God Almighty said we should? If not, then we must change our relationships with our wives, or the mothers of our children, so that they can feel loved and secure in the home situation in which they live. If you don't know how to change, or need help in doing so, there are many places which will give you the support you need.

Start with your local pastors, or contact the Parenting Support Group right here in Toowoomba, who have trained personnel and volunteers who will come along side you and mentor your whole family. Remember, your children are your inheritance to the future of this nation.

Therefore, the church should be an expanded version of the home/family situation. Where teenagers and young children from dysfunctional families can come and see family groups of loving, caring parents, grandparents & godparents, collectively mixing and moulding the lives of young people within the community, the state and the nation.

When people come to church it should be to a place of peace, to a place of security, to a place where people can come together to worship & praise Jesus together, and where this love for Jesus is transferred to one another, within the church community.

Now the church is awakening; it is going back and re-examining the first generation church, and what Jesus did!

Some churches are coming to realise that Jesus did not set up an office and wait for people to come to Him, (by appointment between Tuesdays & Fridays) to let Him hear their problems, or ask for help, or have Him heal their hurts and wounds.

These churches have got the revelation that ***Jesus went out to the people,*** who were hurting, who needed healing, who were desperate to feel the Father's love.

By going out, they are fulfilling the great commission; these churches are sharing the love of God abroad, towards all mankind; not keeping it locked up in a building, to be released for one hour on a Sunday, and then put back into a box again.

Please take a minute to look at this God Tube presentation:
This is our Mission [http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=F921C1NU]

The churches who are **"going out"** are in fact **"bringing the people in"**, because these people feel this is real love, by people who genuinely care about them, and who want to help them get their lives back together again.

These are churches that recognise that it is important, to have role models that youths and teenagers can relate to, especially if they don't have these role models at home.

Churches are now encouraging older men and older women to take on the role of **"spiritual parents"**, or **"spiritual grandparents"**, or just to be available, with a "non-judgemental ear", to listen to their problems, steer them to an answer from within the Word of God; to encourage their Christian walk, and the walk of all members within the community.

One of the greatest revelations for any modern church is to realise that at the time of Jesus Christ, ***the home and the temple were the focus of all Hebrew life and culture.***

- Worship was conducted at the temple.
- Sacrifices were offered at the temple.
- Schooling was done at the temple.
- Priests and/or Levites did medical procedures at the temple.
- Circumcision was done at the temple.
- Betrothal and Marriage ceremonies were done at the temple.
- The first part of any Jewish funeral was done at the temple.

However, in today's "modern" society, with more "liberal" lifestyles, laws and customs, which clearly are not in accordance with scripture, we find that the church has been sidelined, or in many cases left out of the focus of many families, and their cultures.

Churches who have come to recognise that "the church" has been sidelined, and who have made the effort to become more pro-active in community life, while standing firm on strong Christian values and lifestyles, have had amazing results and successes.

These churches have become once again, a main player in community life of the area, with Government agencies and NGO's more than welcome to include "enlightened churches" into their community programs. Why, because these agencies see, there is a real desire by these churches to make a positive difference within their communities, for the betterment of the community, and the nation at large.

Spiritually also, when you do what God tells you to do in His Word, it gets His attention, and blessings start to flow, not only to the individuals within the church, but for the church as a whole, and for the community at large where this church is operating.

Because of situations I have described above, there are lower crime rates, improved school attendances, better grades at school, and better church attendances; all of these are positive achievements, both for the community and for the church.

The 21st century Church has to realise that we are in some of the final stages of the "spiritual war" between good and evil upon this earth. Muslim clerics are going out into the highways & byways to recruit dissident youths into their causes for evil.

They have created Islamic Youth Centres to indoctrinate their type of Islam into these thirsty hearts, to promote hatred, to kill all "unbelievers" (to Islam).

If these youth are recruited into Islam, it is the fault of the existing Christian Churches, who have not obeyed God, who have not gone out into the highways and the byways to provide God's love and a helping hand to these people, who desperately need to feel loved, cared for, and wanted in their society.

We know from scripture that love casts out fear, love overcomes a multitude of sins, and that is why Jesus came upon the earth – to save sinners. **This is the primary role of "The Awakening Church".**

CHAPTER FIVE: WHAT MAKES A GOOD LEADER?

What makes good leaders is a question, which has been travelling around the religious conference circuit now for nearly half a century, but still our leaders do not seem to be getting any better. Why is that?

Firstly, I think that the leaders of today have failed to recognise that one type of leader does not fit all types of situations, hence the **"one shoe fits all mentality"** is not founded on scripture. For example:

1. **Moses:**

When God wanted a leader to go and face Pharaoh and demand that God's people are allowed to leave Egypt, God raised up Moses, a man raised and educated inside the Egyptian culture, a man who could read and speak like a native, and who understood the etiquette of the Pharaoh's house.

But prior to sending him back to Egypt, Moses was honed, moulded and changed in the desert for 40 years, until he was ready to heed the Master's call.

Was Moses an enthusiastic follower of His calling? No! He made all the excuses under the sun as to why God should pick someone else – but eventually He agreed to take up the challenge and do as God commanded.

Moses wandered the desert for 40 years moulding the people into a nation and establishing scriptural administration and leadership structures within the nation of Israel. This was a very special type of leadership for a special situation and time in the life of the nation of Israel.

Moses was a special type of leader selected by God for a special task. Once selected – GOD EQUIPPED!

2. **Nehemiah:**

When God needed the walls around Jerusalem to be rebuilt, God did not call a "Moses" type leader to undertake this task. He raised up Nehemiah – an encourager prophet, to plan out and encourage the people to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem.

Here again God selected **a special kind of leader for a special type of task** within the nation of Israel.

3. **David:**

When God wanted the nation of Israel to experience the golden era of peace and prosperity, God raised up a man after His own heart – David, a warrior, prophet, priest, musician, and king to the people of Israel.

A "Moses" type leader or a "Nehemiah" type leader would not have been adequately equipped to do this task.

God had to raise up somebody especially equipped to fit the requirements of leadership, to meet all the requirements of the task set before Him.

David was a special type of leader selected by God for a special task.

4. Solomon:

When God wanted to build His temple, not even King David was an adequate choice.

God raised up King Solomon, a man gifted with a double portion of wisdom to undertake this enormous task.

Here was a man who was able to organise all types of craftsman, to work independently, and collectively, on one of the major construction projects of that time period.

King Solomon was one of the first Project Managers of the Bible era. **Here again, God selects a special leader for a special task.**

5. Isaiah:

When God needed a statesman/prophet, none of the leadership types already identified were right for the task.

God chose Isaiah to lead and advise the nation of Israel, but also to prophecy future distant events which would come to pass.

Here in 66 chapters are some of the greatest prophetic utterances of the whole Bible. Isaiah, under the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit, was able to prophecy:

- How the Son of God would be born
- What would His role be on earth
- What would be His ministry on earth
- How He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver
- How He would be captured
- How He would be tried with a "kangaroo court"
- How He would be put to death
- How He would be raised up to glory
- Isaiah had the revelation of salvation in all its fullness, through the blood of Jesus Christ.

All these prophecies were made some 42 generations before Jesus was born. **A very special type of leader for a very special task.**

6. Paul:

When God needed a fearless church planter, He did not choose any of the leadership types mentioned above, nor did He choose any of the 12

disciples who spent 3 years with Him as apprentices, to later become the 12 Apostles.

No! Jesus took a man who firstly opposed Christianity. He changed his life dramatically on the road to Damascus, remoulded his theology in the Arabian desert, in "Holy Spirit Bible School", gave him a burning desire to teach & preach the message, that the Messiah had come, the one all the Jews were anxiously waiting for.

When this message was rejected by the Jews, He took the message of salvation to the Gentiles and the "Age of the Gentiles" began.

Through the revelation of the Holy Spirit to Apostle Paul, we have many of the Epistles of the New Testament and some of the best theology about leadership, giftings, order of services, and church administration available in the Bible today. **A very special type of leader for a very special task.**

Throughout all of Biblical history whenever God has needed someone to plan, initiate, organise, revive, or implement, a **"God project",** He has called upon leaders (or raised up leaders) to do this task.

As we have seen from the examples above, God selects a different type of leader for each and every **"different type of task"**. A **"one shoe fits all"** mentality of leadership does not line up with scripture.

It is this new type of leadership in today's church which is going to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit; Receive a vision or creative event, for the biblical functioning community, that God is trying to raise up in a specific city, town or nation.

It is that type of new leadership which is going to insist that prayer, teaching and fellowship, will bring a revelation into the lives of the believers.

When revelation occurs within the Body of Christ, transformation can then take place, in the individuals, and collective lives of the corporate Body of Christ.

It is this new type of leadership of the Church which will instil the importance that the Church is to become a **"House of Prayer"** [24/7] and that prayer is one of the cornerstones of our daily communication with God, not just when we are in trouble, or when we want something.

It is this type of new leadership who recognises that understanding the teaching on the importance of the Blood of Jesus Christ, must continue in the church today.

It is this type of new leadership who insists that the Holy Spirit gifts are to be active and in use in the Body of Christ today.[All 9 of them]

It is this type of new leadership which recognises the importance of the 5-fold ministries, as defined in Ephesians 4:11-16 and these are still needed in the Body of Christ today, so that all maybe elevated to a higher level of spiritual maturity, continually approaching the likeness of Jesus Christ, till He returns to take home His bride, without blemish.

It is this "**God appointed leadership"** which will coordinate ministries, establish small group structures within individual churches and/or cities, and lift up the importance of worship as a lifestyle (not just 30 minutes on a Sunday morning) and inspire the congregations under their care, to reach out to people who are spiritually lost from within the community.

Who will do all this? Leaders that's who! Romans 12:6-8 give a clear picture of what we all have to do as individuals in the Body of Christ.

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; ***if it is leadership, let him govern diligently;*** *if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

In churches over the last 100 years, many of our churches have not been led by leaders, but by teachers. Leaders and teachers are two distinctly different types of giftings, and they have two completely different viewpoints, behaviour patterns and points of emphasis.

Both have important roles in the Body of Christ, but teachers can't lead, because they are focussing on a different agenda. Teachers want to edify the Body of Christ, which is very important and there will be no change in the Body of Christ without gifted and dedicated teachers.

Leaders on the other hand, want to take the congregation on a journey, on a mission, into uncharted territory, where their faith will be tested, where their gifts will be utilised, where they will be forced "out of their comfort zones" and into active duty, for the glory of God.

Teachers concentrate on Biblical studies and message preparation, but are not quick to pick up the warning signs and implement corrective steps that should take place within the church.

Programs maybe starting to deteriorate, the financial base of the church maybe starting to be eroded, or the congregations' morale could be starting to fade.

Teachers will not pick up the early signs of these events and sometimes when it does become apparent to them (the teachers) it is almost too late to correct without major surgery.

On the other hand, people with leadership giftings walking around in the church, will have warning bells going off inside their heads. They will be continually identifying problems:

a. We need to pay more attention to this.

b. We need to solve this NOW!

c. We need to get this program back on track.

d. We have to analyse why we are still doing this program this way, ***when it is clearly not working.***
e. We have to initiate a new program and focus on something else, as the Holy Spirit leads us.

Teachers want to bring all members of the congregation to a place where they are biblically sound and not tossed to and fro by every different doctrine.

On the other hand, Leaders want to encourage the individual members of the congregation "to get involved" in the vision of where God wants to take the Church, so that each congregation member can fulfil their individual destinies.

From these examples, we can see that God has equipped Teachers and Leaders with two different lenses, through which to view their roles and their responsibilities within the Body of Christ. Both are important – but both are distinctly different.

Whenever a person tries to minister in a position outside of his giftings he is operating in the flesh. Whenever that happens, God cannot bless the efforts, because God cannot go against His word.

In their book "Rediscovering Church" by Lynne & Bill Hybels[2] they identify 8 important points for leaders.

1. Leaders have the ability to cast a vision
2. Leaders have the ability to release people into their giftings
3. Leaders have the ability to inspire and motivate people
4. Leaders have the ability to identify the need for positive change – and then make it happen!
5. Leaders establish core values
6. Leaders allocate resources effectively
7. Leaders have the ability to identify entropy
8. Leaders love to create a "leadership culture"

In conclusion: What makes a good leader?

1. He/she is a person who is continually attuned to the Holy Spirit, and in-tune with the Holy Spirit's instructions for their own individual lives, and the lives of those people who the Holy Spirit has put under their care.
2. They have a clear vision and instructions from the Holy Spirit about their tasks and how to go about them.
3. They have the ability to impart the vision to their congregations and to "get them actively involved in the vision", releasing individual people to utilise their God given gifts within the vision and the congregation.

[2] Rediscovering Church: ISBN 0-310-20408-9

4. They are people who consider prayer to be of utmost importance, not only for themselves, but for the whole congregation, and actively encourage people to become "People of Prayer".
5. They are people who have the revelation that **"Prayer changes things" – NO Prayer! NO CHANGE!!!**
6. Leaders are people who have the revelation that **"Worship is a Lifestyle"** and make sure that adequate teaching and resources are available for the congregation to actively participate in worship on a daily basis.
7. Finally, a good leader is a person who never expects his congregation to do anything that he is not prepared to do himself. A good leader, leads by example.[3]

CHAPTER 6: GOD'S ARMY ON THE MARCH

We are commanded in the Word of God to "go to all nations and preach/teach the Word of God, making **DISCIPLES** in the name of Jesus Christ, starting first in our home city, then the surrounding areas, the rest of the state, the rest of the nation and then to the rest of the world."

We are also told to "earnestly seek the gift of Prophecy", yet in more and more churches today, the desire to "go out and preach the word" is diminishing and the "gift of prophecy" is being frowned upon.

The aim of this teaching, is to bring the focus off ***"what the churches are saying"***, and **to bring the focus BACK onto "WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS"** about these topics.

The Secular Army:

We know that in the secular army there are two ways to join.

1. You can volunteer to become a member, or
2. You can be conscripted into the army, whether you want to be there or not.

Whichever way you join the army does not matter, because once you are "in the army", you must go to "boot camp" and be trained in the basics of weaponry, how to march, (& march & march) how to recognize people of different ranks, & how to obey those in authority over you. You also see first-hand, the repercussions and punishments, if you do not obey those in authority over you.

There is a covenant made between you and the army.

1. You agree to serve them, in whatever capacity they choose for you, and wherever they want to send you. On the other hand;

2. The army covenants to feed you, train you, provide you with housing, (could some of those tent be called housing?) clothing, provide medical facilities, and if necessary, look after you family, in times of hardship and distress.
3. In the event that you are injured during your service, the army covenants to provide you with the best facilities and doctors available, so that you recover from your injuries.
4. If you are unable to resume to your normal duties, then other duties are assigned to you.
5. If you are unable to perform any military duties, then the army covenants to give you a pension and to look after you and your family forever.

There is more to this description, but you get the idea.

Spiritual Army of God:

The **Spiritual Army of God** is similar in some ways, & very different in others. **There are no Volunteers in God's Army**.

You may be surprised by this statement, but it is true. When you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, you become conscripted into God's army, (whether you realise it or not; it is the truth) and Jesus Christ is the Commander-in-Chief.

Romans 8:28 states: *And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God,* ***to them who are the called according to his [divine] purpose.***

We are ALL called, there are no exceptions. But many do not know what the divine plan and purpose is for their individual lives, hence they seem to live their Christian lives in a form of "spiritual limbo," not knowing what they should do, where they should go, and who they should relate to. Because of this situation, they cannot mature spiritually.

This is confirmed in Hebrews 6:1-3, which states: *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ,* ***let us go on unto perfection****; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God; of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit.*

This is Apostle Paul's definition of "Spiritual boot camp". Why would God **not allow us** to move on to perfection? Simple answer: ***we have not passed the tests that have been placed before us.***

If we look at the scripture now, piece by piece, then maybe you will get the revelation of why people are still in "spiritual limbo".

This scripture starts with the word: **"Therefore"**. As Bible students, we all know that when we see that word (therefore), we must go back into the previous verses/chapters and see why the word is there – for.

Refer Hebrews 5:10-14

Called of God, a high priest after the order of Melchisedec. Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you ***AGAIN*** *which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. [*That is what the word is *"there for".]*

- You have become dull of hearing
- When you ought to be teaching others, you need teaching yourselves.
- And to be taught **ONCE AGAIN**, the first principles of the oracles of God.
- You should be eating the "meat of the Word" but instead, you are still "spiritual babies" relying of being "spoon fed" and drinking milk only.
- That is why you cannot discern the difference between good and evil, and keep going around the same mountain, over and over again.

Paul, in his writing to the Hebrew Christians, identifies in these first 3 verses of Hebrews chapter 6, what he calls the kindergarten classes of Christianity.

1. The doctrine(s) of Christ. More than one doctrine.
2. Foundations of repentance from dead works
3. Faith towards God
4. The doctrine of baptism(s) (plural) – not one baptism, but more than one
5. The doctrine of "laying on of hands", (when, why, who can & how.)
6. The resurrection of the dead
7. Eternal Judgement

Here Paul lists the 7 fundamental doctrines of a "kindergarten Christian".

Unfortunately today, if you asked some pastors to prepare a sermon on each of these topics, they would be struggling, let alone members of their congregations!!!!

A wise general once said these words: "An army can never go farther than its leader.

THE SAME PRINCIPLE APPLIES TO CHURCH CONGREGATIONS IN THE WORLD TODAY!!!

A church congregation cannot become more mature than its leader/senior pastor. That is why there are so many "baby Christians" in churches today.

I have heard pastors say: “We are expecting miracles. We expect that we will see people raised from the dead”.

That is impossible to achieve, if the leader has not been there and done that!!! Don’t believe me? Look at the Scriptures. It is confirmed in 2 or 3 places.

- Elisha was able to raise people from the dead, because Elijah did it before him.
- The early church Apostles were able to raise people from the dead, because they saw Jesus do it.
- There are people in South America, who cannot read or write, but they can raise people from the dead, because they have faith in God and they have seen it happen with their own eyes.
- If you have not seen it, or done it, how can you expect it to happen?
- In a similar manner, you cannot lead a congregation into the throne room in worship, if you have never entered the throne room before yourself!
- So what to do now?
- How do we move forward?
- How do we change our attitudes and our focus & concentrate on what God wants us to do – not what some church denomination says we should do?
- How do we know, that what the church is saying, right here and now today is for you, as you read this teaching?

The only valid test is to get down on your knees before Jesus Christ and pray for the Holy Spirit to do the following:

1. Reveal (confirm) to you the real Calling/Gifting upon your life. Remember God has given each person a gift, which is to be empowered and manifested by the Holy Spirit, for the glory of God.
2. Check that your direction lines up with the word of God.
3. Connect with spiritually mature people within the congregation and talk to them about what their vision is, and how you can be part of it.
4. This vision should also line up with the vision of your senior pastor for your church.
5. *If any of these things do not line up with the Word of God, then reject it, because you will already be on the wrong path.*

Why do I say this?

Apostle Paul was very clear in his statements: He said: *If any man comes to you speaking another doctrine, which does not line up with the Word of God, reject* it. He even goes further than that, to make sure that you really understand how important this is. He said: *Even if an angel comes speaking another doctrine (which does not line up with the Word of God) then reject the angel, because THAT ANGEL has not come from God!!!*

So, we have identified/confirmed our calling; we have listened to the vision of the spiritually mature elders in the congregation; and reviewed the vision of the senior pastor; and of the church; and you now agree that they all line up with the word of God. What do you do next???

THE ANSWER IS SO SIMPLE; I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY SO MANY PEOPLE DON'T FOLLOW IT! BE OBEDIENT TO THE CALLING ON YOUR LIFE AND JUST DO IT!!!

When you are marching in the 100% submissive will of God, then God has to:

1. Bless you
2. Protect You
3. Guide You
4. Make sure the Word(s) you speak, does all that it was sent out to do; it shall not return void!
5. Empower you with the Holy Spirit & manifest your gifts, to bring honour & glory to Jesus.
6. Add to the church daily.

However, there is a challenge here for all senior pastors.

If God added to the church daily, those who the Holy Spirit called, (as indicated in the Scriptures) have you trained up and equipped congregation members to deal with another 365 new converts in one year?

The answer without question **should be** "YES", but how many pastors/churches can truthfully claim this statement?

That is why the Body of Christ is crawling like a small child, instead of marching forward like a confident army, on "God's business", going about "doing good" and "healing all those who are afflicted by the evil one."

Now you notice I did not say, "talking about doing good", or healing the sick. I actually said **DOING IT!**

Paul commanded us to be **"DOERS OF THE WORD"** not just "hearers & speakers only".

So the challenge of this teaching is this:

1. Which direction are you going?
2. Are you confidently marching, or just crawling along?
3. Are you really making an impact on the secular world, by being God's agent in your city?
4. Do people in your city know you are a Christian? ***by your actions - not just your words?***

If you have problem with any of these questions, then get into the Word, pray to the Holy Spirit for a revelation and become "an obedient servant" of the Lord, marching to the beat of the Holy Spirit drum, not the drum of this "secular", satanic world.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE END-TIME CHURCH

The Book of Revelation, given to Apostle John about AD 97, is a book which many pastors and leaders steer away from, because "it causes so much controversy" within the church.

Yet this same book is the only book of the Bible which clearly indicates that God will give a blessing to each and every pastor who preaches and/or teaches from its pages.

There is also a promise that God will also bless each and every congregation member who hears, and acts upon the words of this book. (Revelations Chapter 1, verse 3) "*Blessed is he who reads, and they who listen to the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is at hand."*

So my question is this: ***Why would any pastor be so selfish as to prevent God from giving blessings to people in his congregation?***

Doesn't seem to make sense to me; but yet, I am just a person who loves God and tries to point others to the truth of His Word.

In the following chapters of Revelations, Jesus points out the problems with five (5) out of the seven (7) church types identified geographically, and as end-time church types throughout the ages.

Even the church where Apostle John had been the "senior pastor" for over 16 years, was given a blast. The church of Ephesus, planted by Apostle Paul, and later led by Apostle John was accused of "losing its first love".

In utmost humility, Apostle John recorded this chastisement against himself, and the church he was responsible for, so that all future generations could see that God has no favourites; He does not love any people more than others. (Although He does bless some more than others).

Why do I say this? Because God has promised to bless all those who obey His commandments. So the easiest way to get blessings from God is to learn to become obedient to His words, His will, and His divine purpose for your life.

Why do I bring up these issues now? Well simple really, God is coming back for the church (His betrothed) to be His bride, and that betrothed is to be "without blemish". So the role of the end-time church is quite simple. **Get the betrothed cleaned up, ready for the wedding ceremony. Make way for the King!**

This means that all worldly or secular practises, which have been allowed to infiltrate into the church body, or the way it appoints its leadership, or the way it runs the financial side of the church, need to be examined, to make sure that they line up with the word of God.

As it was in the Old Testament, Priests and Levites had married outside their tribes and their race, and had polluted the Levitical

priesthood. God sent a prophet to tell them their mistakes and to get rid of their wives.

So it is with the churches today. There are now Pastors and Elders who have been ordained, and appointed to offices of responsibility, who have wrong sexual persuasions, which are clearly defined in the scriptures, as an abomination before the Lord. These people clearly do not line up with the requirements of Pastors and Elders, As described in 1 Timothy, nor in other places in scripture.

There are other people who belong to secret societies (like the Masonic Lodge) who are in positions of power and authority within the churches. The scripture tells us that we cannot serve two masters. Therefore people who are Masons must make a choice. They either serve God, or they serve Masonry; one or the other. These people must be removed from their positions, so that God can bless **HIS CHURCH**.

The Holy Spirit is calling the Body of Christ back to a position of holiness. ***"Be ye holy, as I AM holy".*** Without a clear vision of holiness and purity within the Body of Christ, the church leadership will fail in its task to prepare the betrothed to become "the Bride without blemish."

The sad thing is that God will hold the church leadership accountable for this failure, and many who have "done mighty things in My name" shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, because Jesus Himself has said: "I do not know or recognise them; get away from me."

The time has come when the Holy Spirit will start a shaking and a sifting in the spiritual world, which will become very evident in the physical world as well.

Floods, droughts, fires, earthquakes, famine, tsunamis and other catastrophic events will become more frequent, as God sifts and shakes His church, and puts the faith of this generation of believers to the test.

If we pass the test, then we shall be cleansed, purified, holy and ready to be moved to the next level of spiritual maturity; with an invigorated spirit, bursting inside of us, ready to take on any challenge the Lord puts in our path, because we recognise the signs of the times around us.

The time has come for the Church leadership to call a fast, to pray for revelation of the areas, within each church congregation, which needs the spiritual knife to be used, to cut out any impurities, so that the whole congregation is not affected by the rot which has already started to eat away precious lives from salvation.

This will not be an easy task. Sometimes it will be very painful for the senior pastors, as the Holy Spirit reveals areas of their own lives which needs the spiritual knife to be used, to bring them back to a place of submissive will to the Father.

But the Good News is that Jesus forgives and blesses all those who repent and turn back to Him. So why don't we start today>>>.